

Changes to the Historic District Creation Process



Effective December 6, 2012
City Council Ordinance 2012-12-06-0932

Summary Background



- Revisions to the policy for the historic district creation process requested by members of City Council in 2012.
- Unified Development Code (UDC) was amended prior to this in June 2010 with changes to the historic district creation process.

Former District Creation Procedure



Process could be initiated by:

- Any person owning property within the proposed area
- Historic Preservation Officer (HPO)
- Historic and Design Review Commission (HDRC)
- Zoning Commission
- City Council

Former District Creation Procedure



Public Hearing Process:

- HDRC
- Zoning Commission
- City Council
- Property owners notified of final ruling

Former District Creation Procedure



- The Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) would hold at least one public meeting to announce the designation effort.
- Affected property owners and registered neighborhood associations were invited to attend via written notice from the OHP.

Former District Creation Procedure



- Notified property owners had at least 90 days following the public meeting to provide written notice (signature form) in favor of or opposition to the proposed district.
- Additional public meetings could be held.
- Designation would move forward through public hearing process unless **51% of property owners opposed.**

Concerns with Former Procedure



- **Emphasized negative**
 - process moved forward *unless stopped* by opposition
- **Misunderstanding about abstention**
 - not voting was perceived as a “yes” vote
- **Issues with voting**
 - people, parcel, land trusts, businesses

Approved Changes to District Creation Process



- Following the initial public meeting, a neighborhood must submit a petition showing a “**substantial**” **percentage (30%) of property support** in order to begin public hearing process.
- UDC to outline minimum required information from property owners

Approved Changes to District Creation Process



- OHP sends written notice of HDRC hearing (30 days prior) to all affected property owners with enclosed comment card for owners to return indicating favor of or opposition to designation

Approved Changes to District Creation Process



- Focuses on support instead of opposition
- Requires property owners to demonstrate support before starting the public hearing process
- Encourages communication among neighbors

Approved Changes to District Creation Process



- **Who has a vote?**
 - Property owners
 - Property owners with multiple properties get a vote for each property
 - Properties owned by governmental entities will not be counted in the 30% support requirement
- **How is support or opposition verified?**
 - Most recent Bexar County Appraisal records

Adoption of Changes to District Creation Process



Recommendation for Approval:

**Historic & Design Review Commission (HDRC):
Oct. 17, 2012**

**Zoning Commission Recommendation:
Nov. 20, 2012**

**City Council:
Dec. 6, 2012 - Ordinance 2012-12-06-0932**